Christian Leadership Formation
LDR 510 OL

The mission of MB Seminary is to educate and equip men and women to help lead the church in reaching Canada and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Instructor: T. Anderson, D.Min.
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Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisites: none
Contact/Office Hours: Send me a note, and we can set something up!
Course Term: January 11–March 13, 2027

Course Instruction

This course is primarily an asynchronous online course offering. You are required to watch or listen to the course videos and instructional content that is posted in the "Lessons" tab of the Populi classroom. We will have one required introductory session on Teams to help us get to know one another, answer questions, and get off to a good start.

- Monday, January 11, 2027, at 4:00–4:45 pm PCT (BC time). The link will be in the Populi classroom.

Course Description

How do churches develop leaders who are growing in their love for Jesus and their ability to serve with excellence? This course will help learners grow as Christian leaders and give them practical tools to help others develop their leadership. Learners will explore how to strengthen six key Christian leadership practices: 1) cultivating a growing relationship with God, 2) developing godly character, 3) discerning and living out personal calling, 4) growing deep community, 5) building healthy teams, and 6) strengthening key leadership skills.

Course Objectives

This course's theme and content are consistent with, and taught through the lens of, the *Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith*. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Formulate a theology of leadership, rooted in Jesus's model of servant leadership, that grounds your approach and provides a framework for evaluating leadership practices in your ministry context.
- Appraise your personal strengths and growth areas, particularly as they relate to your leadership.
- Discern and articulate your God-given calling through a statement of biblical purpose, core values, and personal vision.
- Design and begin implementing a personal growth plan that fosters sustainable spiritual, emotional, and practical growth.

- Research, write, and communicate as a scholar-practitioner who thinks critically and deeply about the six practices of Christian leadership.
- Integrate ideas and personal experience to generate fresh insights into the six practices of Christian leadership.

Deep learning happens when you work with ideas, not just recall them. Your work in this course will be evaluated on how well you engage with, integrate, and apply what you're learning, not on repeating basic facts. In every assignment, aim to show the following kinds of thinking:

- Comprehension: wrestling, grasping, explaining, and restating ideas in your own words
- Application: applying what you're learning in new ways and situations
- Analysis: breaking material into its parts and showing how they relate to one another
- Synthesis: integrating separate ideas into a new whole and seeing new connections
- Evaluation: judging the worth of ideas against clear criteria, others' voices, or your own life

Required Texts

- Nehemiah. Any modern translation (NIV recommended). 20 pages.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda.* Rev. and exp. ed. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2011. Available in the DTL. 373 pages.
- Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership.* New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989. Available in the DTL. 107 pages.
- Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature.* Updated ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017. Required reading is Chapter 10 only, "Go the Next Step to Develop a 'Rule of Life.'" Available in the DTL. 15 pages.
- Smith, Gordon T. *Called to Be Saints: An Invitation to Christian Maturity*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013. Available in the DTL. 250 pages.
- Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. *Confession of Faith*. Articles 6—Nature of the Church and 10—Discipleship, including Explanatory Notes and the Commentary and Pastoral Application, are available here. As an alternative, you may use your own tradition's Confessional statement instead, with appropriate citation.

Required Inventories

- Bradberry, Travis, and Jean Greaves. *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*. TalentSmart, 2009. **Purchase a new print copy.** Each book includes a single-use access code for the online assessment, so used copies and most e-book versions won't work. The book's strategy chapters will help you with Forum 4.
- Frazee, Randy. *The Christian Life Profile Assessment Workbook: Developing Your Personal Plan to Think, Act, and Be Like Jesus*. Updated ed. Nashville: HarperChristian Resources, 2015.
- CliftonStrengths for Students. Select the Student Rate Top 5 assessment here: https://store.gallup.com/en-CA/product/cliftonstrengths-for-students/01tPa00000Qh7P4IAJ
- Ministry Match at https://theministrymatch.com/ (Register and purchase the Lay Version)

Other Recommended Resources for your Leadership Library

- Comer, John Mark. *Garden City: Work, Rest, and the Art of Being Human*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015.
- McNeal, Reggie. *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders.* Rev. ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.
- Smith, Gordon T. *Your Calling Here and Now: Making Sense of Vocation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022.
- Wessner, Mark. *Finding Leaders for Tomorrow's Churches: A Discernment Guide for Leaders and Teams.* 2026.
- Wilkes, C. Gene. *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1998.

Ministry Involvement

Leadership is learned in practice, not only in study. Throughout the nine weeks of this course, **you are expected to be actively serving in a ministry context**—a church, parachurch ministry, workplace, or community setting. The setting and role can vary; what matters is that you're serving. This course is about your own leadership, understood both in the classroom and in the places you serve.

Name this context in your Mentor Contract (Week 1), bring it into your mentoring conversations, and reflect on it throughout the course in your forum posts and papers. It will become the focus of the contextual section of your Theology of Leadership paper. If you're not currently serving anywhere, please contact me as soon as possible so we can identify a suitable context or alternative together.

Schedule of Assignments

Week	Due Date	Assignments	% of Grade	Cumulative %
1	Jan 11	Introductory Teams Meeting 4:00 pm PCT		
1	Jan 16	Mentor Contract (Appendix A)	2%	2%
1	Jan 11–16	Forum 1 (Nehemiah & Nouwen)	3%	5%
2	Jan 23	God's Handiwork Workbook	15%	20%
3	Jan 25–30	Forum 2 (Blackaby & Servant Leadership)	3%	23%
4	Feb 6	Personal Leadership Development Plan	25%	48%
5	Feb 8–13	Forum 3 (Smith & Godly Character)	3%	51%
6	Feb 15–20	Forum 4 (Bradberry & Emotional Intelligence)	3%	54%
7				
8	Mar 6	Mentoring Experience Analysis & Reflection	13%	67%
9	Mar 13	Theology of Leadership	33%	100%
9	Mar 13	Course Evaluation		

Assignments and Evaluation

Before the Course Begins

Nine-week courses move quickly, and a little preparation makes a big difference. Before the course begins, I encourage you to do the following:

- **Secure your mentor.** The Mentor Contract (Appendix A) is due at the end of Week 1.
- **Start your inventories.** Order a new print copy of *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* for its assessment code. For the *Christian Life Profile*, ask three people who know you well to complete an assessment of you, and give them time to do it.

- **Read the book of Nehemiah and *In the Name of Jesus***. Download the "Nehemiah Prayer and Action Worksheet" when the Populi classroom opens. We'll discuss both in Forum 1.
- **Begin the *God's Handiwork* workbook**. It's also available when the Populi classroom opens one week before the course begins. It's due at the end of Week 2 and is a foundational part of the course, so begin prayerfully and give yourself time.

There are five assignment deliverables in this course.

1. Discussion Forums (12%)

This course has four discussion forums, which run from Monday to Saturday of the week indicated. Each one gives you a chance to explore key questions, readings, and course videos together, share your thoughts and experiences, and learn from one another. Complete the assigned reading and videos before each forum so you can take part meaningfully, and plan on about two hours for each forum week. In each forum, post one substantive response, reply to at least two classmates' posts, and keep the conversation going on your own post. Post your substantive response by the day indicated in the Populi classroom, so others have time to respond.

Forums are a best practice in online learning, and they replace the conversations we'd have in the classroom—think of them as a chance to dig deeper together and learn from one another's ideas and experiences. Your mark for each forum comes from three kinds of participation. Most of it (60%) comes from the quality of your substantive response of 300–500 words that really wrestles with the ideas. (Please stay within this limit!)

Up to 20% comes from shorter, conversational contributions: a good question, a word of affirmation, or a quick thought or shared experience on someone's post. The best of these are coaching-style questions or stories that nudge others to think more deeply or differently. Build on what others have said, bring in your own experience, and feel free to respectfully challenge one another—but please do it in a way that encourages and cares for each other pastorally, too. The last 20% reflects your overall engagement, including timeliness. Did you help make the forum a rich place to learn, for yourself and for everyone else?

Have fun and enjoy the opportunity to be part of an enriching learning community.

2. Mentoring Experience (15%)

Students are required to secure a mentor and meet with them weekly for seven weeks, for at least one hour per meeting. These meetings should primarily focus on the student's personal and leadership development, and specifically, their written assignments. Prayer should be prominent. Students should view these meetings as opportunities to benefit from their mentor's experience and guidance.

The student should take into consideration the following criteria when selecting a mentor:

- The mentor and protégé must be one in Christ
- The mentor is considerably more experienced in leadership than the protégé
- The protégé respects the mentor (i.e., if you turned out just like your mentor, you would be happy with that outcome)
- The mentor is willing to invest meaningful time into the life of the protégé

There are two parts to this assignment:

Part One - Mentor Contract (2%)

The student and mentor will establish a **Mentor Contract** (see Appendix A) at the first meeting. Both will sign the contract. Please submit a scanned copy in the online classroom by **January 16.**

Part Two - Mentoring Experience Analysis & Reflection (13%)

After your sixth mentoring session, write a 1,500-word reflection on your mentoring experience. Don't simply describe what you talked about. Tell me how your mentor's wisdom shaped you.

Drawing on the six practices of Christian leadership, focus on the areas where your conversations had the most impact. Be specific. Name the counsel, questions, Scripture, or examples your mentor shared with you; "through our conversations I learned…" isn't enough. Instead, reflect on how you grew from these conversations. How did your mentor support, challenge, or add to what you've been learning in the course readings and discussions? How has this changed your thinking, your practice, or the way you understand and live out your calling? How did your mentor help you begin living out your PLDP or other growth areas? What blessings and challenges did you experience along the way? Be honest and willing to be vulnerable. If the experience wasn't as transformative as you hoped, reflect on why. Be sure to engage with Scripture and the course texts throughout, with citations.

Include a summary schedule of your mentoring meetings, with the date and length of each. Before your seventh meeting, give your paper to your mentor and ask them to read it, add comments in the margins, sign it, and return it to you. It is your responsibility to ensure that you and your mentor meet the required number of times for a minimum of seven hours. If there is an issue, please contact me to discuss alternative strategies.

This signed reflection paper is due **March 6, 2027.**

3. God's Handiwork: Discerning Your Personal Calling Workbook (15%)

Download the *God's Handiwork* workbook from the Populi classroom. Part One: **Known** helps you discern who God has made you to be through your purpose, story, values, and gifts. Part Two: **Sent** turns to your vision and ends with a one-sentence personal calling statement.

Complete your inventories before you start, including asking three people who know you well to help you with the Christian Life Profile. Give yourself time, spreading the work over several days. Begin each session in prayer, and aim for honest answers rather than correct ones. This workbook lays a foundation you'll build on in later assignments.

Submit your completed workbook in Populi by **January 23, 2027.**

4. Personal Leadership Development Plan (25%)

The assessment tools showed you some of your strengths, practices, and tendencies that will help you live out your calling. Yet we are all works in progress. We have strengths we can develop further, and weaker areas that may require our attention. The key is to understand what God desires of us as expressed in our personal calling, and then take the necessary, and often bold, steps to live out the calling he has for us.

This assignment has five parts:

Part One - Your Personal Calling Statement (5%)

Begin with the core values, vision, purpose, and one-sentence calling statement from your *God's Handiwork* workbook. Share how your core values are embedded in your purpose and vision. Refine your statement as necessary. Then present your refined calling statement with at least one visual image that captures its heart, and briefly explain the connection.

Part Two - Rule of Life (18%)

In the course instructional content, you were introduced to the Rule of Life template. Using the template available in the Populi classroom and Scazzero's work (chapter 10), reflect on each area and how you are doing well and where you still need to grow. Why does each matter? What could you add or change that would strengthen your leadership foundations and better position you to live out your personal calling?

To help you identify which areas should be a top priority for you right now, conclude with a short summary identifying your top two or three Rule of Life elements that will receive extra attention over the next few months. Share this with your mentor or another trusted person. Be sure to include a note saying who you shared it with, and explain why these elements matter for you in this season.

Part Three - Inventory Reflection (40%)

For this part of the assignment, reflect on the results of the assessment tools you completed for this course: Ministry Match, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, CliftonStrengths, and the *Christian Life Profile*. Here are some specific questions I would like you to tackle in the reflection process:

- What are some common themes that seem to emerge from the results?
- How do some of the results from the inventories build upon each other? For example, how might your top spiritual gifts in the Ministry Match assessment add to your understanding of your top five signature strengths from the CliftonStrengths assessment (or vice versa)?
- Where do the inventory results seem to contradict each other (or your own or others' view of yourself)? How might you explain these apparent contradictions?
- What opportunities for living out your calling more effectively do you see coming out of these results? I expect to see a detailed integration of your God's Handiwork workbook into the discussion for this question.

Part Four - Strategic Plan (35%)

After reflecting on each inventory's results, establish three strategic objectives that will promote your development as a Christian leader over the next three months. Indicate the rationale for selecting each

objective (why is the objective important in light of your calling as articulated in this class and your inventory results). In addition, identify at least <u>two key action steps</u> for each objective, which will help you take steps toward achieving the objective over the next three months (you will have at least six action steps in total). Make sure that all the action steps are **SMART**:

- **S**pecific (i.e., focused on one clearly defined area)
- **M**easurable (i.e., you should be able to chart your progress and know when you have achieved the action step)
- **A**chievable (i.e., you should be able to achieve the action step within the stated time frame)
- **R**elevant (i.e., the action step should actually help you achieve your overall objective)
- **T**ime-framed (i.e., you should include a completion date so that you have a clear target for completing the action step)

Here are two examples of SMART action steps:

- I will memorize one verse per day, starting today, for the next three months.
- I will develop my teaching gift by attending the Teaching Adults Effectively conference next month.

At the end of this section, **develop a creative summary** of your top three prioritized action steps (in order of priority) that you and your mentor can use as a one-page visual reminder (think of something you can hang on your fridge!). You can do this in any application or program or form (including art). The point is to make it memorable and something that you will use as you lean into your personal growth.

Import a photo or file into your summary, or you may submit it separately.

Part Five - Setting up Supportive Accountability **(2%)**

For this part, give the entire assignment to your mentor. Include a note at the end of your assignment saying that you have distributed a copy to your mentor as directed.

This assignment has a maximum length of 2,400 words (not including the summary) and is due **February 6, 2027.**

5. Major Paper: Theology of Leadership (33%)

This paper brings the course together. Drawing on Scripture, the course videos, the course texts, forum discussions, your mentoring conversations, and other resources, develop a biblically sound and personally relevant theology of Christian leadership. Then test it in the ministry where you have served during this course. Your theology should name what you consider the non-negotiable aspects of Christian leadership and explain why they are critical.

Develop a coherent, integrated essay that answers the following questions and reflects deeply on your own life and ministry:

- **What is Christian leadership?** What sets Christian leadership apart from leadership in general? Ground your answer in Scripture, drawing on the life and teaching of Jesus and at least one other biblical leader. Also engage with Article 6 of the *MB Confession of Faith* (or your own tradition's).
- **Leading as a servant.** Jesus redefined greatness as service (Mk. 10:42–45; Jn. 13:1–17; Phil. 2:5–11). What does servant leadership mean, and what does it not mean? How does a servant leader use authority, influence, and power? Engage Nouwen's account of the temptations of leadership and Blackaby's account of the leader's role and influence.
- **The leader's character and values.** What kind of person must a Christian leader be? Identify the character qualities and core values you believe are non-negotiable for every Christian leader, not only for you, and explain why. How is that character formed? Engage Smith's vision of Christian maturity and Article 10 of the *MB Confession of Faith* (or your own tradition's).
- **How a Christian leader leads**. How should a Christian leader cast vision, make decisions, build healthy teams and community, and keep growing in skill? Draw on Blackaby and the course videos.
- **Your theology in context.** In the last section, briefly describe the ministry where you have served during this course: its setting, the people, and your role. Then apply your theology to it. Where does your theology affirm what you see, and where does it challenge the leadership practices there, including your own? What has serving in this context taught you that sharpened or revised your theology? Name one concrete way you will lead differently there as a result.

Ensure that you engage Scripture, the three course texts, at least three additional scholarly sources, and the *MB Confession of Faith* articles (or your own tradition's) as you develop your thesis. All citations should be in Turabian format. You may also draw on course videos, forum posts, and your mentoring conversations, cited appropriately.

This paper should not exceed 3,000 words and is due **March 13, 2027**.

Additional Notes about Written Assignments

- Assignments are due by 11:59 pm PCT (BC time) on the due date. Please submit your assignments in the Populi classroom. When submitting your assignment, **please ensure your first or last name is included in the filename** (e.g., Anderson-Theology of Leadership.docx)
- For late assignments, I may deduct 5% of an assignment's total possible value for each day it is late. However, if you require an extension, I will grant one extension of up to one week for one assignment during the course without penalty.
- If exceptional circumstances require an extension beyond the end of the course, please consult with me as soon as possible. Depending on the nature and timing, you may be required to submit an *Incomplete Grade Contract* with the Academic Director to complete any outstanding work after the course end date.

Course Evaluation

Near the end of this course, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. Your feedback matters. The course evaluation will be integrated into the Populi classroom beginning in Week 8. Please see the "Evaluation" tab on the left-hand side of the classroom in **Weeks 8 and 9** to complete your evaluation.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	97-100	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	93-96.99	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	90-92.99	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.
B+	87-89.99	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	83-86.99	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	80-82.99	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	77-79.99	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style.
C	73-76.99	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.
C-	70-72.99	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision *or* references and resources not taken fully into account *or* examples are basic or not completely convincing *or* barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.
F	Below 70	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.

Academic Notes & Policies

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire MB Seminary community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and are expected to adhere to the principles of sound academic scholarship at MB Seminary. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's words, ideas, or work as one's own without proper acknowledgement, whether intentional or unintentional. This includes copying text without citation, closely paraphrasing a source without attribution, submitting work written by another person (including use of AI tools, per the policy below), and resubmitting one's own previously submitted work without the instructor's permission. Students are expected to cite all sources in Turabian format as outlined below. Suspected plagiarism will be addressed and may result in a reduced or failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, or further disciplinary action, depending on the severity and circumstances of the violation.

Artificial Intelligence

Students may use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot) to assist with research for assignments in this course, provided that any assistance or content provided or created by the AI tools is appropriately identified as a source and fully cited. This includes citing the exact prompts used. Citation is not needed for simple proofreading; however, AI tools may only be used to support your work, not to produce it. **AI may not be used to rewrite, augment, transform, translate, paraphrase, or increase the fluency of your original work in any way.**

Failure to clearly indicate and reference AI-generated material, or the use of AI paraphrasing tools that alter the syntax, clarity, or originality of your work, will be considered a violation of academic integrity and will be reported as academic misconduct.

Students should consult their instructor if they have any questions about using generative AI tools.

Paper Formatting

Students are required to adhere to the Turabian notes-bibliography style for all papers. This is the standard for theological education. Please consult the following manual for instructions:

> Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

Assignment Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a grade to the course instructor by submitting written reasons within one week of receiving the grade. Formal course grade appeals go directly to Dr. Brian Cooper, Academic Dean (briancooper@mbseminary.ca), or, in the case of Dr. Cooper's courses, to Dr. T. Anderson, Academic Director (tanderson@mbseminary.ca). The result may be a higher, lower, or unchanged grade. This decision is final, and no further appeal is available.

Populi Student Portal — https://mbseminary.populiweb.com

All students at MB Seminary will receive a username and password to the Seminary's Learning Management System, Populi. If you have difficulty with your password or login credentials, please contact Keith Reed, Director of Church Relations and Ministry Implementation (keithreed@mbseminary.ca).

Course Intensive/Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergencies, every effort will be made to communicate any class cancellations to your church host and contact. Please also refer to your course's classroom page in Populi for updates.

Equity of Access

Students with a learning disability are responsible for informing the seminary and requesting accommodation before the course begins, so that necessary arrangements can be made to support their learning. Accommodation requests will be taken seriously, and every effort will be made to implement them. However, blanket extensions to due dates or other deadlines are not an appropriate request and will not be granted, and accommodations cannot be arranged retroactively once a course is underway.

For further information, please contact Dr. Brian Cooper, Academic Dean (briancooper@mbseminary.ca) or Dr. T. Anderson, Academic Director (tanderson@mbseminary.ca) for assistance.

Appendix A — Mentor Contract

Leadership Mentor:

Name:	*Name of Church:*
Ministry Position in Church (if applicable):	*Phone:*
City/Province:	*Email:*

MB Seminary Student:

Name:	
Ministry Context (Where are you serving during this course, and what is your role?):	
Email:	*Phone:*

Meeting Dates:

1. _____ 5. _____
2. _____ 6. _____
3. _____ 7. _____
4. _____

Mutual Commitments:

Because the mentoring experience is an extension of the classroom, it is expected to help students achieve the course outcomes, including the intersection of the course themes with the student's life and ministry. The mentor and the student will sign this contract to demonstrate their commitment to each other and the mentoring experience.

_____ _____
Mentor's Signature Date

_____ _____
Student's Signature Date